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726 even short expeditions could well take a party over 100 miles from home; and 100 miles through dense, trackless forest and across major streams is no mean trip.

It is obvious that Munduruci warfare consisted of much more than sporadic and short forays. The average party campaigned only during the dry season, setting out when the rivers fell in May and returning before they again rose in November. Longer expeditions set out at the end of the rains and remained in the field throughout the rainy season and the following dry period, returning before the next rains.

721 559 As among the Indians of the North American Plains, youths sought openly for the excitement of war and looked upon it as a means of self-validation and aggrandizement of prestige. But unlike the Plains Indians, the Munduruci did not openly assert this prestige once it was won; if anything, the person who achieved status became even more self-effacing and less prone to open competitiveness. The young men, however, did not embark upon raids by themselves. They expressed their desire to the chief of the village in words indicative of the martial disposition of the society: "My grandfather, take us to hunt the parawat. We wish to die in the forest, not in the village." The chief consulted with the older men in order to decide whether the occasion was auspicious. If there was general approval, he proceeded to organize a war party that would include the eager young but would be under the competent direction of experienced elders, for age in Munduruci society was an important criterion of status.

721 202 Although the initiative for a war originated in one village, men from several villages participated. The determination of a village to form a war party was quickly communicated to other communities, but a formal invitation had to be extended. This was carried by a man of the *Muchacha* society, a group of older warriors who were especially well versed in Munduruci lore and magic and who had taken enemy heads. As the messenger neared each village he sounded three short blasts on a horn used only by members of the society, and was answered by a like signal from a Muchacha of the village being invited. After entering the village, he delivered the invitation and proceeded on his itinerary, collecting volunteers from a number of communities.

621 701 722 Intervillage cooperation enabled the Munduruci to place large war parties in the field without stripping any one village of all its manpower. Those who took part generally desired to clear land for gardens first, but even when this was not possible or when the expedition lasted more than a year, the horticultural cycle could be maintained by those remaining behind. The problem of leadership of a group drawn from several communities was resolved by delegating authority to two village chiefs who were also members of the Muchacha society. Actually, the two formal leaders did not have absolute control, and all important decisions were made by the older men of the expedition acting as a body.

● 708 The war party was accompanied by the wives of the warriors and a number of unmarried girls. Their tasks were to carry cooking utensils and all of

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the equipment of the men, except for their arms, thus leaving the males unencumbered for hunting and fighting. They also cooked, fetched water and firewood and performed other female services. Contrary to Spix and von Martius' (1831:131) assertion that the women helped on the battlefield, informants said that the women were always left at a safe distance from the scene of combat. The men then proceeded to encircle the enemy village under cover of darkness.

No warfare rituals were held prior to the departure of the expedition, but the most powerful shaman available always accompanied the war party and throughout the course of march was able to ascertain events in the enemy village by sending one of his instruments abroad to spy upon the foe. Once the village had been encircled, the shaman blew ant-eater hair or macaw feathers in the direction of the houses in order to put the enemy into a deep sleep. Eagle feathers were similarly directed at the village in the belief that this would cause the defenders to become confused and impotent in the face of attack.

When the occupants of the village were benumbed, the warriors waited for the cry of a species of bird that breaks into song at dawn. When this signal was heard, the chiefs sounded blasts on their horns and cried the order to attack. Incendiary arrows, made by affixing dried corn-cobs to the end of the arrow-shaft, were ignited and loosed at the thatch roofs of the houses. The Munduruci then broke from cover and dashed into the clearing of the enemy village, emitting wild shouts calculated to terrify the people. Adult males and females were killed and decapitated, and prepubescent children of both sexes were captured by the attackers. The Munduruci then beat a hasty retreat before the enemy could reorganize his forces and summon additional support.

The retiring Munduruci force drove its captive children ahead hurriedly and stopped at the temporary shelter only long enough to pick up the women and supplies. They then made a day and night forced march until they had reached a safe distance from the enemy. At this point, the expedition turned toward home or, frequently, to new fields of conquest.

A central object of the raid was the taking of enemy heads, and a strict protocol was observed in the preparation of the trophies. After killing an enemy man or woman, the warrior quickly decapitated the corpse. The spine was severed at the foramen magnum, but the skin was cut around the chest, shoulders, and back to leave a substantial flap below the point of severance. The excess skin compensated for the inevitable shrinkage that accompanied desiccation. A piece of wood was then thrust into the mouth of the trophy to prevent its locking closed in rigor mortis. During the return march the head was preserved by removing the brains, boiling it, and then drying it near a bonfire.

The war party broke up after reaching Munduruci country, and the participants proceeded to their respective villages. Signals were sounded on horns a short distance outside the villages, and two messengers were sent to inform the people of the results of the raid. The boys of the community went to meet the waiting warriors and received the trophy heads from them. They ran